APPENDIX I

Wide footnotes on page 13

[Address by the Governor of Tamil Nadu]

Menmaithangiya Sattamandra Uruppinargale!

Honourable Members of the Legislature,

I would like to congratulate all of you on your success in the elections and extend my best wishes to you for an active and fruitful tenure of service as Members of this Legislature. May you serve our people to the best.

2. We mourn the loss on this occasion of our wise and beloved late President Thiru Fakruddin Ali Ahmed who was a symbol of secularism. Our sincere and heartfelt condolences are due to Begum Abida Ahmed.

3. It is a matter of great satisfaction and relief that seventeen months of the President's rule have ended in Tamil Nadu with a popular Government elected on the basis of free and fair elections to the Assembly. The peaceful and orderly manner in which the elections were contested by various parties and were conducted by the State administration deserve our appreciation. In these elections the people of the State have given a clear and categorical mandate. This mandate strenghtens our faith in the traditions of Parliamentary democracy and provides the basis for a strong and stable Government in Tamil Nadu.

4. My Government considers it as its first task to provide a clean and competent Government to the people of Tamil Nadu who have elected it to power and to root out corruption at all levels. Along with integrity and ability, the administration will also be responsible and responsive to the legitimate aspirations of the people. In many regulatory aspects of Government, the poorer and weaker sections of the people continue to encounter delay and difficulty in securing simple justice in administrative and judicial forums. The new Government will give special emphasis to the provision of free legal aid to the poor. In our efforts to root out

corruption, waste and arbitrariness, we should remember that in this matter, as in others, prevention is to be preferred to cure. Administrative procedures and arrangements need to be streamlined so as to reduce and eliminate the scope for corruption, waste and misuse of power. The vigilance effort will, therefore, be increasingly pursued as an integral part of administrative reform. Similarly, in the development and welfare efforts of the State, the Government will be fully attentive and sympathetic to the grievances, demands and the rising expectations of all sections of the people and of people in all parts of the State with special emphasis on the betterment of the weaker sections and the more backward areas. In all activities of Government, whether they are regulatory or developmental, it will be our aim to insulate the administration from fear or favour. Impartial justice and consideration will be available to all irrespective of caste, creed or political affiliation.

5. In the Union of India, ties between the Centre and the States and between one State and another have become not only closer but also more complex. The assurance given by the Prime Minister that the Centre will maintain cordial and impartial relations with all the State Governments regardless of their political persuasion is welcome. In turn, my Government will extend its, constructive co-operation, based on Anna's philosophy, to the Centre in their efforts for building up a democratic, socialistic and prosperous India on Gandhian lines. At the same time, we shall take every opportunity to strongly advocate the claims of Tamil Nadu, whether they relate to polical, cultural, economic or linguistic issues, with a view to ensure that the legitimate rights and interests of our State and of our people obtain due recognition and response from the Centre. We also welcome the Prime Minister' assurance that States will be given more powers so as to strengthen the economic structure of the Indian Union. It is now being increasinly recognised tha the Centre can be strong only if the States are also strengthened. We trust that the imbalances in our federal Constitution in this regard will be rectified at an early date through appropriate Constitutional amendments and we shall support all eforts in this direction. We are also confident that with more powers we can make rapid progress in our efforts for improving the development and welfare of Tamil Nadu.

6. Our relations with neighbouring States, particularly in regard to drinking water, irrigation and power, are such that mutual co-operation should be continuously fostered. Unfortunately, this has not always happened in the past and it will be the policy of my Government to promote such co-operation on the basis of mutual goodwill, understanding and benefit.

7. It will be the firm policy of my Government to implement the two-language formula which was enunciated by our late Chief Minister Anna and unanimously approved by this august Assembly. This formula fully represents and reflects the wishes of the people of Tamil Nadu. We shall pay special attention to the development of Tamil in all its aspects. Encouragement will be given to the study of Tamil in other States. Necessary funds will be allotted for preservation and research relating to Tamil literature, art, archaeology and history. A programme for the translation and publication in Tamil of classical and contemporary books in other languages will be undertaken. Government assistance will be provided to indigent Tamil scholars.

8. The agricultural year which has ended was one that caused concern mainly because of the failure of the South-West monsoon in the catchment areas and the difficulties that were experienced in the Cauvery delta. However, several remedial steps were undertaken by the Agriculture department and these efforts met with the full co-operation of our alert and enterprising ryots throughout the State and particularly, in the Cauvery delta. In the coming season, we shall take necessary steps to ensure that agriculturists are provided with adequate and timely irrigation supplies.

9. The food position in Tamil Nadu is quite comfortable and we are confident that there will be no problem of shortages in the coming few months. The Government have adequate stocks of rice to maintain the public distribution system. There is also easy availability of rice in the open market at fairly reasonable prices. Our millets position is also quite comfortable and prices are reasonable. The increase in the prices of groundnut oil and other edible oils has been causing us some concern. We are keeping a close watch over the price trends and the Government will take appropriate action as will be necessary if any situation of scarcity is artificially created or if prices go up abnormally The problem of edible oils, however, is not confined to our State alone; it is an all-India phenomenon and has to be tackled on a countrywide basis.

10. The objective of the Government will be to ensure a remunerative price for the grower and a reasonable price for the consumer by eliminating the scope for explolation by middle men. The policy which will be followed by this Government will neither by purely producer-oriented nor consumer-oriented, but essentially people-orierted and will aim at reconciling the interests of the producer and the consumer.

11. It will be my Government's endeavour to build up a net-work of retail points in the public sector including the Co-operative sector, to ensure equitable distribution of essential commodities at reasonable prices. There are now nearly 9,300 fair price shops distributing rice, wheat and levy sugar at controlled prices. We propose to extend the scheme of fair price shops, so that each of say about 16,000 revenue villages will have at least one fair price shop in the village itself. It will also be our aim to see that these fair price shops not only deal in the commodities under the public distribution system but also in other essential commodities like coarse grains, dhalls, edible oils, tamarind and chillies so that supply of these can be assured to the public at reasonable prices.

12. The next session of the Legislature will be the Budget session and you will have an opportunity at that time to consider in detail the concrete measures, schemes and projects of the new Government. I shall on this occasion confine myself in outlining the main policies and programmes which the Government will place before itself.

13. It is a matter of regret that, as revealed in a recent study, the proportion of people living below the poverty line in Tamil Nadu has increased during two and a half decades of planned development and has reached the high level of 59 per cent in 1974. The removal of poverty and unemployment will be the twin principal objectives of our Government and indeed today they are National objectives. Every scheme we undertake will have to stand the test whether it will help in reducing poverty and in promoting employment.

14. Villages are the backbone of our Nation's life and economy. Seventy per cent of the people in our State live and work in the rural areas. It is necessary to have a multi-pronged and integrated approach to rural development based on agriculture, irrigation, agro-based and other small-scale industries,

cottage and village industries, rural housing, trade, transportation and rural electrification. In the production of agricultural inputs such as seeds, fertilisers and pesticides and of mass consumption goods such as textiles, the rural people should obtain direct benefits through greater employment and increased incomes. At the same time, their living conditions should be improved with the provision of basic minimum needs such as drinking water, mass literacy, educational and health facilities, house-sites and housing and good communications. All-round rural development on these lines will be the main emphasis of the new Government.

15. It is regrettable that despite substantial expenditures in the Plans, a most essential need such as drinking water supply in rural areas is still substantially inadequate. It is welcome that a special provision has been made in the Central Budget to assist States in meeting this need. We shall increase our own allocations for the sector and shall announce a concrete time-bound plan of action in the Budget to effectively tackle this problem. It is also a matter of regret that despits substantial expenditure on the Veeranam project, no solution is yet in sight for solving the drinking water shortage in Madras City. We shall immediately review this problem and take all necessary steps to remedy the situation. In particular, with the co-operation of neighbouring States, we shall expedite the Krishna water project.

16. Programmes for providing substantial employment in rural areas in the off-season for unskilled labour will be formulated and implemented. These programmes will be linked to the creation and maintenance of lasting assets such as medium and minor irrigation sources, roads, housing, educational and other community facilities, soil conservation and provision of drinking water supply. The educational system will be increasingly vocationalised based on detailed surveys of technical and industrial opportunities in each district. Vocational education along with larger investments will result in better employment opportunities in urban and semi-urban areas. With assistance from the commercial banks, special emphasis will be given for increasing opportunities for self-employment especially among the rural artisans, other weaker sections of the people and small entrepreneurs. The traditionally disadvantaged sections of our society such as Scheduled

Castes and Tribes, handloom weavers, fishermen and women will receive special support and assistance from the State. In their case, economic progress and social emancipation are interlinked. The Government will devise and implement suitable schemes to redress the disabilities suffered by these large sections of the community.

17. Investments on Power development and on increasing major, medium, minor irrigation and ground water utilisation will receive immediate and continuous attention. In doing so, existing capacities will be utilsed to the maximum, new investments expedited and economics achieved in the use of power and water.

18. We are committed to the policy of Prohibition. It has great benefits for the people. Women and the younger generation are particularly affected by the evils of drinking. It also leads to anti-social activities in many spheres enabling anti-social elements to violate economic discipline and social norms. It shall be the effort of the new Government to educate public opinion while pursuing legal measures for the strict enforcement of Prohibition.

18-a. Elections to the local bodies have not been held as per schedule. As soon as the muster roll case is disposed of, elections to the Madras Corporation will be held. The public feel that there are numerous defects in the electoral rolls. In view of this, elections to the Madurai Corporation, Municipalities and Panchayats will be held when the task of correcting and setting right the electoral rolls is completed. Besides, it is my Government's desire that the Chairmen of Panchayat Unions and Municipalities should also be elected directly by the people as in the case of Presidents of Panchayats. Necessary legislation for this purpose will be brought before the House very shortly.

19. We recognise that all our efforts for economic progress should be fitted into and form part of a larger and long-term development programme. The planning process in Tamil Nadu has unfortunately fallen into a state of suspense. The new Government will revive the State Planning Commission as soon as possible and entrust it with the formulation of a detailed and comprehensive Sixth Five-Year Plan. The long-term Plan should not only be technically sound and financially feasible but

also be able to mobilise popular understanding, participation and support. In the planning process, the Government will seek to involve local people at the block, taluk and district levels so that the Plan fully reflects the felt needs and aspirations of the people and takes into account the resources available in terms of men and material at all levels.

20. Honourable Members, your present session will be a short one in which you will have to attend to only immediate legislative work which cannot be postponed. In this and in the coming sessions, I would appeal to all sections of this House to rise above the heat and controversy of the election campaign from which you have just emerged. The deliberations of this House should be conducted in its traditional spirit of dignity, decency and decorum with constructive co-operation from the Opposition and an impartial approach from the Government to all sections of the House. I have no doubt that given such a spirit of common purpose which subjects sectional interests to the larger objective of promoting the growth and welfare of Tamil Nadu, this House will be able to discharge the high responsibilities which the Electorate has placed on it. I commend you to your tasks and wish you all success and a bright future.

Vanakkam- (cheers).

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